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ABSTRACT

A study of 24 elementary, middle, and high schools conducted by the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools (CORS) found that simply adding school-based support services to bureaucratically organized schools is unlikely to prove effective, and does not necessarily produce better student achievement. However, the research linked schools with strong community to better student outcomes. This paper presents findings of a CORS study that investigated whether a student- and family-support program in a communally organized school was more focused, coordinated, and effective than a similar program in a school organized along bureaucratic lines. Two schools from the CORS sample were compared--Edison Middle School, located in a large urban district in the western United States, and Boone High School, which served an economically disadvantaged, racially mixed, student population. Findings show that Edison involved teachers in the Family Support Service (FSS) center, which led to facultywide collective responsibility for students' academic and social well-being. In addition, the vision and organization at Edison established a balance between autonomy and collaboration with other organizations. At Boone High School, the specialized and bureaucratic organization contributed to the proliferation of fragmented programs, which led to a lack of organizational focus. A conclusion is that programs must be integrated into the organization of the school as a whole to create a focused vision and sense of shared responsibility. (Contains 10 references.) (LMI)

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SCHOOL-BASED STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES: COMMUNITY AND BUREAUCRACY

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SCHOOL-BASED STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:

COMMUNITY AND BUREAUCRACY

The Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools (CORS) studied twenty-four elementary, middle, and high schools selected because they had engaged in substantial amounts of organizational restructuring. Among the innovations found in these schools were heterogeneous grouping, assessment by portfolio, block scheduling, teachers teaching in teams, site-based shared decision making, and health and social services located in the school to serve students at risk. While these innovations were important in a number of ways, in general they did not explain differences between schools that were more or less successful in promoting student learning (Newmann, et al., 1995)

If such organizational changes, frequently touted in the restructuring movement as important, do not necessarily lead to more academic success for students, what does? Our search for the critical factors to explain differences in student achievement produced three central principles to characterize the more successful restructured schools. First, staff showed a concern for the intellectual quality of student experiences and outcomes; second, the school had established a focused and sustained effort at program and staff development; and third, the school had developed the characteristics of a community. These three principles identify social and cultural qualities, rather than specific structural changes, to explain significant

differences in student achievement among restructured schools.

That successfully restructured schools in the CORS research reflected communal characteristics is consistent with earlier findings from Bryk and Driscoll (1988) in their study of secondary schools from High School and Beyond data, and more recently, by Lee and Smith (1994) using NELS data. Lee and Smith concluded that the communal character of schools contributed substantially to explaining the academic effectiveness of a national sample of restructured schools as compared with non-restructured schools. They also found that not only higher overall academic achievement but greater equity of academic achievement was produced by schools that had been restructured to become less bureaucratic and more communal.

Beginning with the criteria developed by Kruse, Louis, and Bryk (1994), communal schools or communal organization means that staff share norms and values directed at student learning as the central purpose of schooling; that teachers make collective decisions affecting their practice; that staff engage in collaboration, reflective dialogue, and de-privatize their teaching practices; and that a number of structural conditions and social resources are present to provide the social support and technical help teachers need to improve their classroom practice and relations with students. Communal schools succeed in conveying a core set of beliefs, norms, and expectations to students. Finally, parents and the larger community also endorse the school's mission and provide active support for it.

By bureaucratic we mean that decision-making authority is clearly defined, specialized, and hierarchial. Well-defined staff roles and responsibilities create specialization and a clear division of labor. Professionals are credentialed and schools are organized to reflect their expertise. Teachers' roles are circumscribed by particular age-grouped students and/or specialized courses. In middle and high schools these features are more pronounced. Class periods of about fifty minutes segment the day and students move from one specialist to another. Students in such schools are typically tracked into higher and lower achieving groups, and they are further differentiated by the special curricula they receive. Special academic and non-academic programs are based on the premise that students' needs can be identified and addressed by professional expertise housed in these programs.

We examined the CORS data on twenty-four restructured schools to assess the impact of school organization (rather than specific restructuring features) on special programs that provide social, health, and career development services for students at risk. Several among the twenty-four had implemented programs of school-based social and health services for students and their families. The two schools we selected for in-depth study clearly reflected different organizational assumptions. This difference was found in the delivery of academic programs and school-based support services. One, Edison Middle School, was intentionally designed to create a community for students and staff. As we describe later, a number of strategies were employed to build these communal conditions at Edison, and the program of student support services was conceived as an integral part of the school-community. The second school selected, Boone High School, was restructured in some important ways, yet it

still conformed to the assumptions of bureaucratic organization that have dominated most schools in this country. The student services program attached to Boone High was organized to fit this bureaucratic model.

In the study, we address the following question: Is there any evidence to suggest that a student and family support program in a communally organized school is more focused, coordinated, and effective than a similar program in a school organized along bureaucratic lines? Since we compared only two schools, we can not answer this question definitively, but in general, our comparison provides evidence that communal and bureaucratic school organizations produce substantially different experiences for students and teachers. With respect to student support programs, we found very significant differences between the two schools--and the school with the communal form of organization demonstrated a number of advantages. The communally organized school was more likely to succeed in serving the non-academic needs of students because support programs achieved greater integration and focus than in bureaucratically organized school.[1]

Edison Middle School: Communal Organization

Edison Middle School, located in a large urban district in the West, had an enrollment of 1350 students. A charter school, it was also a neighborhood school, and most students were described as "children of color" (37% African American, 33% Filipino, 20% Hispanic, 5% Southeast Asian, and 8% white). Most students were poor; sixty-four percent of Edison's students qualified for Chapter I and 54% were eligible for free or reduced-fee lunch.

One of the state's first charter schools, Edison was the product of a year's planning intended to provide a new and better kind of schooling. Given the opportunity to create a new school, a core group considered what was essential to make the school a place that was good for children and good for adults. Their efforts appeared to have paid off. Questionnaire data from teachers about the strength of professional community in the school placed Edison fourth highest out of the twenty-four schools in the CORS study. Student survey data and observed classroom support for students combined to produce a "student community" measure for each school. Edison students had the seventh highest ranked community measure among students in the twenty-four schools. Combining the teacher and student measures of community to produce a "total school community" rating placed Edison sixth overall. And finally, teachers credited parents with having an important effect on helping to build school community--the third highest such rating by teachers among those in the set of restructured schools. (Higher ranking schools on these measures did not also have extensive school-based support programs.)

Restructuring at Edison took several forms. One innovation was shared decision making by staff in the areas of curriculum, budget allocations, and staff hiring. Because much decision making and administration was done by teachers, the school had need for only one administrator, and counselors were eliminated because their responsibilities were undertaken by teachers. The allocations saved by eliminating counselors and administrators were used to hire more teachers, thereby reducing the teacher-student ratio.

Organizationally, the school was broken into "families" of one hundred and fifty students and six teachers. Further, each teacher had an advisory or home-base group of twenty-five students for whom the teacher had "case management" and counseling responsibilities. It was the home-base teacher who was called the "first line of defense" in helping students and families with social issues and emotional well-being. Inevitably some students reflected problems that went beyond teachers' expertise or comfort level and clinical specialists were needed. Such specialists were found in the Family Support Service (FSS) center located in a wing of the school.

Families and advisory groups were designed to make the relatively large school smaller, to build trust, to personalize education, and to help teachers carry out their responsibility for dealing with the broadest range of students' academic, social, emotional, and health needs. The school day was organized so that teachers had common meeting time to discuss and integrate curriculum and to develop strategies for helping students with learning difficulties, or other problems in the home or community. When a parent needed to be involved, it was the advisory teacher, acting as a counselor, who made the contact. When teachers in a family decided it was appropriate to refer a student to FSS for additional services, it was the advisory teacher who made the referral and followed the student's progress.

The vision of schooling at Edison explicitly and formally extended the role of teachers to include concern for the social, emotional and physical well being of students. This was a new role for many teachers whose professional training was primarily in academic

disciplines, but it was argued that many of the social and emotional issues that affect students' school success could best be addressed by advisory teachers. The Edison "Home-base Teacher's Guide" defined this role as someone who is an advocate for students; serves as a counselor and substitute parent; takes responsibility for monitoring students' attendance, guiding their behavior, and helping them with social/emotional and health problems. The organizational structure of families and advisories, with each teacher serving as a case manager for every 25 students, proved to be a powerful mechanism for developing community among staff and students.

Intellectual substance was central to building community at Edison. As part of the school vision, staff had developed the "Edison Standards" that formed a core of beliefs and practices to guide students and teachers. The standards required students to: engage in community service; present exhibitions once a year to a panel to demonstrate academic progress and social growth; complete a research project; demonstrate competence in reading, writing, mathematics, and research; and demonstrate through their personal behavior an understanding of the Edison Way--a focus on learning, respect for the rights of others, respect for property, and safe behavior toward others. At times school-wide efforts were carried out through the family structure to reenforce the Edison Way. For example, periodically every family was asked to renew its commitment to the tenets of the Edison Way. This meant that the whole school simultaneously reviewed the school's norms and expectations in order to reaffirm understanding of what it meant to be a member of the Edison community. Typically such discussions occurred in the advisory groups of approximately 25 students per teacher.

Organizational features also helped Edison staff and students develop and maintain community. For example, as a charter school, staff were able to select new staff who were willing to embrace the school vision. For each academic quarter, staff selected a common curricular theme that required all 1350 students to work on several common goals and assignments. At the end of each day, a block of time was set aside for group oriented activities. Public exhibitions of student work and performance were given during "town meetings." These sessions were popular with parents who turned out in large numbers to celebrate their children's accomplishments.

Though influenced by national efforts, such as the Coalition of Essential Schools, Edison staff put their personal stamp on every innovation. The *modus operandi* of the school was to borrow and revisé the ideas of others, casting them in what staff called the "Edison language" or the "Edison way." For example, the "principal" was called the Chief Educational Officer or CEO. Shared decision making was designed to build a school culture of shared norms and responsibilities. To a large extent, this culture was reflected in the language that governed day to day interactions in the school. The culture was also built through extended faculty retreats at which ideas and beliefs could be discussed in depth. Common experiences and school-wide rituals and practices provided a bottom-up, internal, and "organic" process. Edison rejected the traditional top-down management that has characterized large urban school systems. The result was a unique identity and personal ownership of ideas, including a fierce sense of independence from the school district central office. One concrete reflection of the Edison culture was the Family Support Service center

described below.

Edison's Family Support Service Center

The school's Family Support Service (FSS) center was designed as an integrated component to provide teachers with a tool to help carry out their responsibilities as case managers of students. The FSS unit was created by a group that included representatives from the county, a number of community-based organizations, several individuals from the district central office, parents and others from the community, and seven educators who later became faculty at the school. An administrator for county social services who was a part of the planning group attributed the success of the school and FSS to the planning process: "We began with the question, 'What do kids need?' rather than with 'How should the school be organized?'" Edison's principal indicated that this meant "taking responsibility for the whole life of the child, (and) radically changing the nature of school."

FSS was explicitly charged with the following responsibilities: to facilitate learning opportunities both in class and after school that help prevent social and emotional problems; to locate and coordinate community resources for academic classes and for after school enrichment programs available to all students; and to provide students and families with professional counseling and other forms of support.

Some FSS services were designed to respond to crises faced by students. For example, when it became apparent that a number of students had recently experienced a death in the family,

a support group was initiated. Other services were preventive, such as group for building self esteem among African American females. Some activities helped students fulfill the school requirement that they participate in 12 hours of community service learning. Ideally, the FSS was to provide a balance of services that were eighty percent preventive and twenty percent reactive to student problems.

In order to implement the above goals, FSS needed organizational flexibility to employ people with a variety of skills. A new intermediate community-based organization, Social Advocates for Youth (SAY), was created to employ counselors and social workers. Such an arrangement was considered necessary for a number of reasons. FSS needed to blend various categorical funding streams of the school district and county. As an independent non-profit organization, SAY was not subject to the same hiring constraints as the school district, and thus Edison did not have to hire counselors from within the school district (many of whom were seen as having a narrow conception of their professional role). Another factor that made SAY attractive was its ability to provide in-service programs through resources not available within the school district. Finally, employees for SAY earned less than if they worked for the county or the school district, and consequently more staff members could be hired within a given budget.

With SAY in place, FSS was able to offer a wide range of social services to students referred by teachers. The FSS staff consisted of two social workers, one psychologist, two counselors, and a paraprofessional. The county and the state funded three and a half of these

positions; the district funded the remainder. In addition, non-profit community groups provided after school enrichment activities, individual counseling, small group activities, and academic tutoring.

Altogether, FSS offered services through twenty-four community agencies that provided a complete range of services to individuals, families, and classrooms. For example, the police periodically held sessions for families to convey information and to build trust. A local university was persuaded to use the school as a site for its social work interns who provided family counseling as part of their practicum experience. A community agency mediated disputes among students, and another intervened with parents whose children were truant. Two groups offered activities designed to promote cultural and social awareness. For example, the Azteca Club specialized in helping Hispanic students find community service internships that involved them in social issues. The club was founded by a recruiter from the local university who hoped to convince young teens that academic achievement was important, that continuing their education was also important, and that college attendance was within reach for these students. Small group activities in the club also targeted students' special needs such as gang membership prevention and assessment of their academic interests.

Many of the twenty-four affiliated agencies worked with small groups of students, usually after school. Liaison between these agencies and teachers was the responsibility of the director of FSS. By meeting weekly with the head of each of the families, and periodically

with the teachers in each family, the director of the FSS was kept aware of individual student needs. She also facilitated opportunities for agencies to work with small groups, and made arrangements for community resources to support each family's academic curriculum. In this way the FSS provided for an integrated form of school and community collaboration that included academic and non-academic dimensions.

As noted earlier, part of the school mission included community service for students. FSS developed community service learning opportunities in a variety of settings. For example, a number of students were involved at a home for the aged. Short-term visits by students evolved into a long-term "adopt a grandparent" program with students working with the elderly on a weekly basis. In one case, a Vietnamese-American student observed an elderly resident who also appeared to be Vietnamese. The student stopped to greet the elderly woman, first in English and then in Vietnamese. The old woman's beamed as she heard the second greeting, and responded immediately to the student. None of the employees at the home could speak Vietnamese and communication with her had been difficult. Subsequently, the student regularly acted as the woman's confidant and interpreter at the home.

Another example of school-community collaboration was the successful intervention of a community agency to quell a dispute between groups of Hispanic and African American students. When teachers were unsuccessful in stopping tension between the two groups, the FSS called on Barrio Station, an organization with training in conflict resolution. Through a number of mediation sessions, Barrio Station was able to dissipate the tension and contain the

problem before there was violence. Resources such as this allowed the FSS to provide non-academic as well as academic support.

Boone High School: Bureaucratic Organization

Boone High School enrolled 1230 students (36% black, 54% white, and 9% Asian). Boone was the county's most economically disadvantaged school; fifty-seven percent of the students were eligible for free and reduced-fee lunch. This percentage had shown a steady rise in recent years indicating the increasing poverty of the student body. Also, the number of students eligible for Chapter I had doubled in three years to 300. During the year of the CORS study, the school led the county in suspensions, and it had an annual dropout rate of approximately ten percent. Only fifteen percent of the school's graduates were admitted to a four year college. Because of these social and economic conditions, the high school was eligible to receive a state grant of about ninety thousand dollars to implement a Youth Services Center.

The fact that Boone was at or near the bottom on most student outcome measures created a mandate for change. The district's central office and the state were exerting pressure on the school to improve student outcomes, and restructuring was the general strategy that was proposed. The State Education Reform Act (SERA) already mandated such restructuring. For example, the use of portfolios was required by SERA for all students in math and English. Restructuring was also promoted by a district initiative that provided staff development. The school had also become a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools.

Despite voting for such membership, the faculty characterized itself as holding diverse educational views, and, in fact, the Coalition had only a few devoted followers who displayed practices consistent with the Coalition's principles.

The lack of a common vision for the school was reflected in measures of community gathered by CORS. Survey data from teachers about the extent of their professional community placed the school near the bottom--twenty-third among the CORS sample of schools. Student questionnaires and observed support for students in class also ranked Boone twenty-third on "student community." Combining the scores for students and teachers placed the school dead last on "total school community" index. Also, teachers' ratings of parents' contribution to building a school community also ranked Boone near the bottom of our sample. Viewed from these different perspectives, the school lacked a sense of community, at least in comparison with the others schools in the CORS sample.

While state mandates and district resources had each produced some restructuring, the Boone faculty was ambivalent about these changes. Many agreed that some changes were needed to improve the school and its ability to succeed, especially with disadvantaged students, but exactly what should be done under the concept of restructuring was not agreed upon. In place of school-wide change, entrepreneurial faculty created special programs. The result was a wide variety of responses ranging from special college preparation programs for high-potential but at-risk students to several initiatives aimed at vocational education including a large building and trades magnet program. While some of the special programs were

considered to be of high quality, the upshot was fragmentation of programs and professional effort.

Boone had for the moment chosen not to implement shared decision making, even though SERA mandated that they must eventually do so. Instead, most decisions were made by school administrators, the central office, or the state. Organizationally, the school had undertaken an experiment that used three co-equal principals to share administrative responsibilities. One principal was in charge of curriculum and instruction, another managed the buildings and grounds, and a third headed pupil services. Such restructuring made the life of a principal somewhat less hectic, but it also made decision making within the school more specialized and hierarchial based on more narrowly defined roles for administrators.

Another attempt at restructuring was reorganizing the teaching staff into "houses." Houses were comprised of teams having four teachers with a common planning period and shared responsibility for a group of approximately 150 students. However, there was significant resistance among a number of teachers to the house system of school organization. All indications were that about half of the staff wanted to retain a traditional form of organization based on academic departments. One rationale for keeping with tradition was that by the time students were juniors and seniors they needed to elect courses based on their interests and track level. Responding to such choices was thought to be best facilitated by a traditional departmental structure. Thus, restructuring created something of a struggle between those favoring departmental organization and those wanting interdisciplinary teams.

A compromise was found whereby grades nine and ten were divided into houses, and grades eleven and twelve remained essentially departmental. This also allowed the teachers to have an option--those wanting to be on a team worked at grades nine or ten, and others not so inclined taught at grades eleven and twelve. However, the ninth and tenth grade teaching teams were weakened because of the school's inability to schedule common meeting times for teachers. Thus, little collective work, joint planning, or interdisciplinary curriculum came from the teams. While teams shared a common groups of students, faculty responsibility for students' non-academic needs was limited. Teachers made referrals to Youth Services Center when they perceived a student was struggling with a problem. The Center housed specialists who dealt with students' social, emotional, vocational, and health problems. However, no organizational arrangements were made to facilitate interaction between specialists and teachers.

Boone's Youth Service Center

Because of the percentage of students eligible for free lunch, Boone was a recipient of state funding to establish a Youth Service Center (YSC), an initiative within the comprehensive State Education Reform Act. SERA became law in 1990, and mandated that each YSC provide five categories of service: (1) health and social service referrals; (2) employment counseling, training and placement; (3) substance abuse referrals and services; (4) family crisis and mental health services and referrals; and (5) summer jobs for youth. In addition to the five mandated categories of service Boone added two initiatives of their own: academic enrichment and parent involvement and support.

The YSC was housed in a suite of offices within the high school. The ninety thousand dollar SERA grant supported two permanent positions, an administrator and a secretary, as well as funding to purchase services from private professional practitioners. In addition, the YSC staff was comprised of several permanent employees paid by the school district. These included a half time social worker, and four other full-time positions that included a "Chapter 2" coordinator, a parent liaison, the Boone Education and Employment Partnership Coordinator, and a second social worker who worked with students who had their own children in the school's child care center. In all, the permanent professional staff included six and one-half positions. However, these staff were supplemented by professional specialists from the community who were paid on an hourly basis out of the ERA grant to provide additional services to students and families.

At Boone, the work of the social support staff was specialized, and although they worked virtually side by side, cooperation and collaboration among specialists was non-existent. Some staff were overwhelmed with work while others seemed not to have enough to do. For example, the half-time social worker provided by the district was overwhelmed. She described her functions as primarily dealing with truancy and family crises arising from abuse in the home and runaway children. She made home visits to screen families for referral to special programs or services. She had to complete complex paper work necessary to take truancy cases to court. Her records contained information about 150 students who had been referred to her because of serious truancy. Yet it was only possible for her to manage twenty to thirty cases at one time, and consequently she was involved in a form of

triage, deciding to work only with students in crisis.

On the other hand, a full-time "Chapter 2" coordinator also was assigned to the school from the central office. She was to provide support and programming for a particular group of at-risk students--those who had been retained in ninth grade because of poor attendance (i.e., truancy). She began the year with a list of eighty such students, but only forty of them actually returned to school. To serve the forty returning students, the coordinator organized groups that included training in peer mediation, study skills, and cultural awareness. She also worked with parents, providing three or four workshops per year that focused on coping and parenting skills. Though her role was parallel to and overlapped that of the half-time social worker, and even though the two workers had offices next to each other, there was little or no contact between the two. Each was unable to describe what the other did.

The autonomy of the "Chapter 2" staffer from the school was highlighted when one of the three principals asked her to make follow-up telephone calls to her case load of 40 in-school students when they were truant. The staffer reported the request to her central office superior who saw the request as inappropriate. In response, the principal received several memorandums from central office administrators spelling out in detail the boundaries of the "Chapter 2" program and indicating that helping the school with attendance was not one of its functions. The upshot was that the principal was not allowed to assign this staff member additional duties, even though they seemed consistent with the overall purpose of the position.

Still another social worker was assigned by the district to the YSC to provide services to the student-parents whose children attended the school's child care center, a new program at the school. This full-time professional served eleven young Boone women with children in the center. Obviously under-utilized, the person was eventually expected to serve thirty student-parents. Even so, a larger case load would not equal that of the YSC's half-time social worker.

These three staff worked within the roles created by the central office in response to different categorical programs and funding streams. Administrators at the school were aware of the inefficiency and inequity of the situation, but they felt impotent to act because each of the three workers answered to a different central office administrator who was accountable for program and funds. The consequence was fragmentation produced by a bureaucratic form of organization that emphasized tightly bounded categorical programs administered from the central office.

In addition to district staff, the YSC was supplemented by professionals, usually clinicians from the community in private practice, who contracted to provide services on a part-time basis. During the study, Boone contracted with providers for seven types of service: art therapy (one-on one counseling using art as a medium); personal growth guidance; anger management; group academic support; individual counseling; self esteem development; and support for students affected by family use of drugs or alcohol. These services ranged from one to six hours per week, and the term of any particular services might run from a few

weeks to a full year. The director estimated that during the year somewhere between 200-300 students would be served. The sum allocated for contracted clinical services was $25,000 per year.

The staff of the YSC noted several advantages of the contract for services system: opportunity to create a diverse staff with various skills and cultural backgrounds; and the flexibility of being able to respond to a group of students by hiring an expert on a consulting basis. Major weaknesses were also clear. Some of the service providers were in the school only one day per week, and this meant that a student having a crisis might have to wait days to talk to the professional familiar with the case. Providers had little or no contact with the YSC or teaching staff, and thus continuity in dealing with students' problems was haphazard at best.

Across the school, the division of labor separated staff from one another in narrowly compartmentalized roles. This condition resulted in a lack of shared communication or collective decision-making, and consequently a lack of community either within the YSC or as part of a school-wide community. Rather than making the YSC more efficient, it was plagued with overlapping, inequitable work assignments, and a lack of focus and coordination of effort. In part, this kind of organization was structured by tradition but also by funding from SERA and the district. As we will see in the next section, this situation was even more prevalent in the YSC's career development component.

Career Development: a plethora of partnerships for Boone

In addition to social services, SERA mandated that schools provide career counseling, training, and placement. Boone responded to this requirement by incorporating into the YSC the Boone Education Employment Partnership (BEEP), a pre-existing program at the school. BEEP was a partnership among schools, business, and government modeled after the Boston Compact. The purpose was to address the academic problems of ninth grade students at risk of school failure. The long-term goal was to "improve the quality of the newly emerging workforce" in the metropolitan area. The mayor was given credit for being the driving force behind the partnership that included the city, county government, the public schools, the private industry council, the chamber of commerce, a local organization for economic development, and the United Way. Such a combination of resources gave BEEP leverage and political respectability in the school and the community.

The partnership issued a statement that "there will be the guarantee of a job upon graduation" if the student honored the contract for four years by maintaining a ninety percent attendance rate and a GPA of 2.0. About sixty Boone students participated in the program that provided services in school through "career planners" who might be a teacher, a counselor, or some other significant adult. A four-year curriculum taught eleven employment competencies. During 1992-93, business provided over 600 summer jobs, developed mentoring programs in seven schools, and provided full-time jobs and post-secondary education to over ninety percent of the graduates who met attendance and academic requirements.

In addition to BEEP, two more community-based career education programs operated independently of the YSC at Boone. One of these was the Urban League Apprenticeship Program. The Urban League provided services to assist low income African American males to obtain apprenticeships in the building trades. Funding for the effort came largely from the state and the Job Training Partnership Act. The intent of the program was to supplement Boone's building trades magnet program by providing employability skills, job shadowing, and placement for African American youth. However, the program had trouble attracting the target population (more white than black students enrolled), and among those who did enroll, many failed the apprenticeship mathematics test and did not advance.

At the same time that the Urban League was attempting to help African Americans to enter building trades apprenticeships, another independent effort was under way by one of the city's largest electrical contractors to establish a relationship with Boone's academic teachers, especially mathematics, in order to increase the academic and technical skills of students for entry into the electrical workers' union. School and employer cooperation was essential in this area if Boone students were to be qualified for well-paid jobs as electricians. Despite efforts by the contractor, it appeared that staff from the Urban League remained unaware of the contractor's overtures. No mechanism was available to influence the math curriculum, something that was essential if students were to succeed in entering this vocation.

The second career education program operating outside the YSC was Habitat for Humanity. Approximately 20 seniors from the building trades program were given practical experience

in the building trades by constructing houses for Habitat for Humanity. The intent was to give students experiences similar to those needed to prepare for private industry, but to avoid problems that accompanied such involvement, especially the requirements of apprenticeships and unions. Homes were constructed in the school's carpentry shop and then erected on site. According to one of the teachers, Habitat for Humanity allowed the school to continue "to teach the kids so they can be learners as well as workers."

The career education programs at Boone provided some useful strategies in addressing the at-risk student population. However, by remaining isolated and uncoordinated they failed to achieve the visibility and support needed to attract students and to provide them with high quality experiences and content. The vision of a powerful coordinating vehicle in the form of the YSC went unfulfilled as the career programs remained small and splintered, even competing against each other. To a large extent, such fragmentation was typical at Boone where staff were encouraged to act as entrepreneurs who should seek out sources of funding to build new programs. Though well intentioned, this strategy lacked a shared vision and focused attention by faculty. The norm of encouraging entrepreneurship along with multiple streams of categorical funding led to uncoordinated programs. Despite the intent of SERA in mandating YSC, a set of coordinated services in the area of career development remained only a dream.

Comparing Communal and Bureaucratic Organization

We have described two schools serving similar populations of at-risk students, but organized in quite different ways. One site, Edison Middle School, incorporated a communal model of organization that required teachers to take individual and collective responsibility for dealing with students' non-academic problems. At Edison, the student support center, although providing a wide range of services from multiple agencies, succeeded in creating a coordinated effort. Professionals with expertise in particular areas were integrated into the school community. Probably most significant was the success the FSS had in involving teachers through the home-base and "family" structure. At Edison, fifty-six teachers shared responsibility for the well being and daily attendance of Edison students. Teachers were the first line of defense in helping students and parents to prevent and resolve problems. The result was a faculty-wide collective responsibility for the social and academic well-being of students. From an organizational perspective, the dispersion of responsibility across the faculty resulted in each adult having a manageable student caseload, familiarity with parents, and a collegial relationship with other team members and with the FSS staff. Responsibility was not only a formal organizational obligation, it was a cultural imperative for staff.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that no problems accompanied the Edison model. In fact, it was recognized that some home-base teachers were less skilled, or possibly less persistent, than others in providing the first line of defense. Two concerns were expressed by staff in the FSS. First, they were concerned that teachers needed more training to carry out their extended role. Most teachers had no college training in counseling and in recognizing the symptoms of personal problems. Second, a few home-base teachers were said to refer

students to the FSS for minor problems, such as absenteeism, without making a substantial effort to provide assistance. Despite these problems, a system of checks and balances operated, because teachers within each educational family were subjected to the norms of collective responsibility expressed by their colleagues. And frequent interactions between teachers and the FSS director tended to also reenforce expectations about teachers' extended role with students and parents. The net result was that Edison succeeded in establishing an integrated, proactive, and flexible set of responses to students as part of a strong school community.

Boone High School offered a number of contrasts with Edison. Boone was an example of restructuring that maintained a model of organization emphasizing bureaucracy. Teachers, administrators, and social services professionals were organized around their specialized responsibilities. Collective responsibility by staff for students' welfare was explicitly rejected in favor of such specialization. But managing this specialization proved difficult, if not impossible. For example, a half-time social worker, was overwhelmed with responsibility for the school's truants. And specialization allowed staff to create a variety of unconnected programs in response to the needs of disadvantaged students.

At Boone, specialization and bureaucratic organization contributed to the proliferation of programs. The locus of control for critical school decisions remained in the central office which held administrative authority and funding. However, the culture of the school was one that willingly relied on the central office for decisions about programs, funding, and

allocation of personnel. When the YSC was authorized, the response of the central office and the school's staff was to conceive of it as another program to add to the already long list offered at Boone. Although the YSC was intended to promote coordination and collaboration among support services, the culture of specialization and fragmentation undermined this purpose.

While decisions by the central office contributed to a fragmentation of the school's internal service delivery system, such fragmentation also occurred from Boone's own attempts to collaborate directly with community-based organizations like the Urban League, private employers, and organizations like BEEP. Each of these initiatives was managed by separate directorships and had separate mandates and sources of funding. The concept of a school as a community with a clear vision and a focused effort did not exist at Boone. Consequently categorical funding, specialization, and multiple initiatives led to a proliferation of isolated, uncoordinated programs. A lack of community within the school became both a cause and consequence of a lack of organizational focus.

Was the scenario describing Boone the exception or the rule? Smrekar (1994) sheds some light on this question with her study of two schools in Kentucky with similar Youth Service Centers. Smrekar describes the effects of specialization by noting that it was service center specialists who contact with parents and consequently teachers had only "remote relationships with families." Particularly crucial, according to Smrekar, was an "absence of regular face-to-face interactions (between parents and teachers) that promote trust and familiarity." The

two Youth Service Centers in the study had "an increasingly singular focus...the perception of a narrowly defined mission around crisis oriented services."

It may be that the opportunity at Edison to start a new school with staff committed to developing a common, coherent vision was a crucial advantage. At Boone, planning did not start from scratch, rather the culture of the school and the district promoted adding new programs in response to school district and state mandates, and the money that followed. This situation meant that programs, previously in place, tended to remain in the school where they competed with new programs for students and resources. Sometimes programs such as BEEP could be folded into the YSC, but others, such as the Urban League's and Habitat for Humanity, while consistent with the overall goals of the new service center, remained free-floating and overlapping with others. Bureaucratic organization, whatever its strengths, was unable to avoid creating this situation of fragmented programs.

Conclusion

The goal of providing school-based support services for disadvantaged youth is certainly noble, and devising effective strategies of this type may be necessary if some children are to be ready to learn when they come to school. However, simply adding such services to bureaucratically organized schools is unlikely to prove effective. Unless these services can become integrated as part of a community of concerned adults, the potential of such services is blunted. A focused vision and the shared responsibility appear essential to such a school community. While Edison seemed to have achieved these conditions, let there be no doubt

that building community was and still remains hard work. It is a job that is never finished. The Edison staff have worked continually to create a communal environment. From the earliest days, faculty took very explicit steps to insure that their community included the students. Articulating the Edison Way was one of the ways they did this. In the end, the school represented a collective vision of how best to address the academic and non-academic needs of their pupils.

The vision and organization at Edison established a balance between autonomy, on the one hand, and collaboration with other organizations, on the other. The school worked closely with many agencies outside the school and utilized the skills of professionals, but staff also insisted that collaboration with service providers support the school vision. Staff stubbornly refused to redefine their mission to conform to outside influences, such as the Coalition of Essential Schools, and especially the district. The Edison faculty was very protective of the school's "right" to govern itself as a charter school and steadfastly rejected any "interference" from central office. Consistent with this stance, it was Edison faculty and parents who took the initiative to collaborate with community based organizations and county health and social service agencies in order to invent the FSS center. The confidence to sail these uncharted waters came from the strength of the emerging community that was developing.

Boone, as an ongoing school in need of restructuring, was at the mercy of many competing influences--SERA, a bureaucratic central office, multiple private employers, the teachers'

union, powerful faculty norms--each of which pulled the school in a different direction and dissipated energy. Without the strength and self-assurance of a clear school vision, it was impossible for staff to make choices and focus the school's attention. New programs could be added, but it was as if nothing could be thrown away. At some point, if Boone is to successfully restructure and use the many community resources available to it, the issues of community building and programmatic focus will have to be faced.

Our findings about school organization pose difficult issues for policymakers. It appears that successful school restructuring means more than adding new programs, practices, and funding. New practices, backed by good intentions, do not necessarily produce better outcomes for students. Simply adding to the panoply of innovations already dotting the school landscape is probably not the best use of new resources. Systemic state-wide restructuring initiatives would seem to benefit from giving attention to the integration of student support programs into the organization of the school as a whole. How can policy promote integration of such services as part of a school community?

This question is a difficult one, but it reflects what research has indicated for some time. As we described at the beginning of this paper, the research by CORS on twenty-four restructured schools indicated that techniques and procedures commonly associated with restructuring do not necessarily produce better student achievement. However, research links schools with strong community to better student outcomes. Mixing school community into the chemistry of restructuring makes it much more likely that we will get the kinds of student

outcomes hoped for. Policymakers must become aware of the subtleties of this chemistry and find ways to promote it as they seek to address ever more complex issues of schooling.

Endnote:

1. This paper continues a series of studies at CORS that has examined issues surrounding the development of support programs for children and families considered at risk or severely disadvantaged. These include Stone (1995); Stone and Wehlage (1994); White and Wehlage (1995); Wehlage and White (forthcoming).

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